

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5086
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY ROME
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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PO, UR, US
SUBJECT: SOVIET COVERAGE OF PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS

1. SOVIET PRESS COVERAGE OF THE PORTUGUESE EVENTS
HAS FOLLOWED PREDICTABLE LINES WITH THE SPECTRE OF
A REACTIONARY ASSAULT ON PORTUGAL'S DEMOCRACY BEING
STRESSED ON ONE HAND AND THE "CONSTRUCTIVE AND
PATRIOTIC" POSITION OF PCP BEING HIGHLIGHTED ON
THE OTHER. PRAVDA JULY 29 SUMMARIZED AN ANALYSIS
BY PCP GENERAL-SECRETARY ALVARO CUNHAL THAT THE
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"CENTRISTS' BLACKMAIL" IN FORCING THE CRISIS IS
PART AND PARCEL OF A "GLOBAL ASSAULT OF REACTION"
AIMED AT LIQUIDATING PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY AND
RESTORING THE DICTATORSHIP. PRAVDA GOES ON TO
QUOTE A PCP SECRETARIAT STATEMENT THAT A SOLUTION
HAS TO BE FOUND IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONSTITUTION
AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

2. THE PCP'S POSITION RECEIVES FULLER ELABORATION IN A TASS REPORT CARRIED ON PRAVDA'S FRONT-PAGE AUGUST 2. THE PARTY IS SAID TO HAVE ADOPTED A "CONSTRUCTIVE AND PATRIOTIC" POSITION AND ISSUED A CALL TO THE SOCIALIST PARTY TO IMPROVE ITS RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND UNDERTAKE COOPERATIVE ACTIONS. THE PCP IS DESCRIBED AS RECOGNIZING THE DECISIVE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT AND IS THEREFORE OPPOSING A PRESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT AND ANY HASTY DECISION WHICH MIGHT TRANSFORM THE "GOVERNMENT CRISIS INTO A CRISIS OF ALL THE ORGANS OF STATE AUTHORITY." POLITICAL OBSERVERS ARE CITED TO THE EFFECT THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WANT TO INVOLVE PRESIDENT EANES IN AN UNSUCCESSFUL NON-PARTY GOVERNMENT AND THEREBY GENERATE INTRA-GOVERNMENT CONFLICTS WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE THE CONFIDENCE OF THE COUNTRY AT LARGE IN THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

3. THE ONLY DIRECT SUGGESTION THAT THE U.S. MAY BE MANIPULATING EVENTS APPEARED IN PRAVDA JULY 30. GENERAL HAIG'S ARRIVAL IN PORTUGAL "FOR A VACATION" (PRAVDA'S QUOTATION MARKS) AND HIS CALL ON PRESIDENT EANES AND ATTENDING PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES REPRESENTATIVES WAS MENTIONED IN A BRIEF REPORT ENTITLED "NATO AND PORTUGAL." LOCAL OBSERVERS WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID TO HAVE NOTED THAT THE "NATO GENERAL'S ARRIVAL 'COINCIDED' WITH THE POLITICAL CRISIS."

4. COMMENT: THE AIR OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE PROSPECTS IN PORTUGAL WHICH IS BEING CONVEYED HERE IS PROBABLY A FAIR REFLECTION OF OFFICIAL THINKING. THE MEDIA HAS SET THE STAGE FOR SEVERAL OUTCOMES, WITH THE FAMILIAR NATO VILLAIN AS PERSONIFIED BY GENERAL HAIG IN THE WINGS IN THE EVENT "REACTION" TAKES THE UPPER HAND. THE PCP IS NATURALLY BEING GIVEN THE POSITIVE ROLE, PATRIOTIC IF PORTUGAL'S DEMOCRACY REMAINS INTACT, PROPHETIC IF THE OUTCOME IS NOT TO THE SOVIETS' LIKING. TOON

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